

USDA Foreign Agricultural Service

GAIN Report

Global Agricultural Information Network

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- Current News on Agriculture & USDA in Iraq -

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Agricultural Extension Activities for FY12 in Erbil – September 18-20, 2011, Texas A&M University (TAMU) representatives, with the support of the U.S. Consulate, traveled to Erbil to meet with officials in the Kurdish Regional Government (KRG) to plan agricultural extension activities for FY12. At the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, plans were made to bring KRG extension leadership to Texas to introduce them to improved management. In addition, a series of follow-up visits by TAMU staff to the KRG were arranged to help strengthen government support for agricultural extension and improve institutional capability to manage extension programs. In a meeting with the Dean of the College of Agriculture at Salahaddin University, support for the roll-out of their new Diploma Program in Agricultural Extension was discussed. Initial discussions were also held on the University's long-term plan to create an Agricultural Extension Department.



Field Trip by The Iraqi Red Meats Association –

The Iraqi Red Meats Association recently held a field trip to demonstrate proper handling, feeding, body condition scoring and use of hormones in cattle at the Baghdad University College of Veterinary Medicine. Forty three farmers participated from all around the country. This field trip was the culmination of the second half of a six-month training series. All participants received certificates for attending the training series and were also given a Sheep Flock Management Guide (a donation from Premier1 Livestock Supply).



Large Donation of Equipment for the Central Veterinary Lab in Baghdad— The Central Veterinary Laboratory in Baghdad received a large donation of equipment from the Naval Medical Research Unit 3 in Cairo. The equipment included a refrigerator, a centrifuge and other supplies. A second shipment of large items, such as a biosafety cabinet, is due soon. The equipment was kindly stored by the U.S. Army medical unit on Liberty Base, until it was ready for pick-up by the Iraqi veterinary Services. The equipment will enhance biosafety and diagnostic capability of the lab to rapidly detect transboundary diseases in livestock.



Books Donated to the Iraqi Veterinary Medical Syndicate— A generous student at the University of Florida just sent many donated veterinary books to the Iraqi Veterinary Medical Syndicate. These books will assist veterinarians across the country improve their knowledge of veterinary medicine.



Iraqi Veterinarians attend the 115th U.S. Animal Health Association Conference in Buffalo, NY–

Five senior veterinarians from Iraq attended the conference to learn about building private-public partnerships in the animal health sector of Iraq. Discussions with key U.S. Government, U.S. Land-Grant University and private sector veterinarians were facilitated by members of the faculty of Colorado State University. The delegation was impressed by the close and positive working relationships between the U.S. federal, state, and private veterinarians and plans to use the Iraq Veterinary Medicine Association (IVMA) to facilitate the development of similar relationships in Iraq. This action will allow the development of a functioning livestock health system which will support livestock production, trade, employment, food safety and security.



Iraqi seed stakeholders participate in the Cochran seed trip, September 14 – 28 –

As part of a 14-day tour of the United States hosted by the USDA Cochran Fellowship Program, six representatives from the agriculture industry in Iraq learned about certified seed operations in a number of U.S. seed facilities. The delegation, which included representatives from the private and public sectors in Iraq, visited places, including Kansas State Seed Labs and Seed Conditioning at Kansas State University and Polansky Seed in Belleville, KS. Qahtan Al Aani, Chairman of the Iraqi Company for Seed Production, noted that they are looking to improve seed varieties available to farmers for wheat, corn, barley, rice, and vegetable crops. Along with learning about certified seed production in the United States, Al Aani was authorized to negotiate for the purchase of varieties that could be imported to Iraq.



Youth Curriculum Workshop in Erbil, Iraq – From

October 9-13 2011, USDA/FAS hosted a youth curriculum workshop in Erbil for nineteen participants from 4-H Iraq, the Ministry of Agriculture of Iraq, the Ministry of Agricultural and Water Resources of the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), AGROZOE, Youth Activities Organization (YAO), Ward Shan, and Al-Shabab. The workshop achieved its primary objective of teaching participants how to develop agricultural based learning programs and training materials to be distributed throughout the country. In addition, it served to strengthen the 4-H Iraq/youth development Iraqi network, and created positive relations and goodwill between the U.S., Kurdistan and Iraq. The workshop was funded by the U.S. Department of State, coordinated by USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), and implemented by FAS, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), U. of Florida, U. of Nebraska-Lincoln, and U. of Pennsylvania.

Personnel Update - There are currently 6 USDA personnel in Iraq at Embassy Baghdad. Mr. John Schnittker will resume his work after extending his contract on Nov 3rd, thus, the number of employees will be 7.